

ROSALIND AT RED GATE

BY
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NICHOLSON**
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RAY WALTERS
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SYNOPSIS.

Miss Patricia Holbrook and Miss Helen Holbrook, her niece, were entrusted to the care of Laurence Donovan, a writer, summering near Port Annandale. Miss Patricia confided to Donovan that she feared her brother Henry, who, ruined by a bank failure, had constantly threatened her for money from his father's will, of which Miss Patricia was guardian. They came to Port Annandale to escape Henry. Donovan sympathized with the two women. He learned of Miss Helen's annoying suitor.

CHAPTER III.—Continued.

"Drop one of the canoes into the water," I said; and I watched the prowling boatman while Ijima crept back to the boat house. The canoe was launched silently and the boy drove it out to me with a few light strokes. I took the paddle, and we crept close along the shore toward the St. Agatha light, my eyes intent on the boat, which was now drawing in to the school pier. The prowler was feeling his way carefully, as though the region was unfamiliar; but he now landed at the pier and tied his boat. I hung back in the shadows until he had disappeared up the bank, then paddled to the pier, told Ijima to wait, and set off through the wood-path toward St. Agatha's.

Where the wood gave way to the broad lawn that stretched up to the school buildings I caught sight of my quarry. He was a young fellow, not above average height, but compactly built, and stood with his hands thrust boyishly in his pockets, gazing about with frank interest in his surroundings. He was bareheaded and careless, and his shirt-sleeves were rolled to the elbow. He walked slowly along the edge of the wood, looking off toward the school buildings, and while his manner was furtive there was, too, an air of unconcern about him and I heard him whistling softly to himself.

He now withdrew into the wood and started off with the apparent intention of gaining a view of St. Agatha's from the front, and I followed. He seemed harmless enough; he might be a curious pilgrim from the summer resort; but I was just now the guardian of St. Agatha's and I intended to learn the stranger's business before I had done with him. He reached the driveway leading in from the Annandale road without having disclosed any purpose other than that of viewing the vine-clad walls with a tourist's idle interest. The situation had begun to bore me, when the school gardener came running out of the shrubbery, and instantly the young man took to his heels.

"Stop! Stop!" yelled the gardener. The mysterious young man plunged into the wood and was off like the wind.

"After him, Andy! After him!" I yelled to the Scotchman.

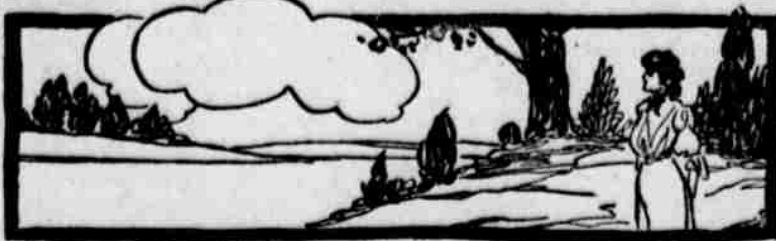
I shouted my own name to reassure him and we both went thumping through the beeches. Whoever the young gentleman was, he had no intention of being caught; he darted in and out among the trees with astounding lightness, and I saw in a moment that he was slowly turning away to the right.

"Run for the gate!" I called to the gardener, who was about 20 feet away from me, blowing hard. I prepared to gain on the turn if the young fellow dashed for the lake; and he now led me a pretty chase through the flower garden. He ran with head up and elbows close at his sides, and his light boat shoes made scarcely any sound. He turned once and looked back and, finding that I was alone, began amusing himself with feints and dodges, for no other purpose, I fancied, than to perplex or wind me. By this time I had grown pretty angry, for a foot race in a school garden struck me with disgust as a childish enterprise, and I bent with new spirit and drove him away from his giddy circling about the summer house and beyond the only gate by which he could regain the wood and meadow that lay between the garden and his boat. He turned his head from side to side uneasily, slackening his pace to study the bounds of the garden, and I felt myself gaining.

Ahead of us lay a white picket fence that set off the vegetable garden and marked the lawful bounds of the school. There was no gate and I felt that here the chase must end, and I rejoiced to find myself so near the runner that I heard the quick, soft patter of his shoes on the walk. In a moment I was quite sure that I should have him by the collar, and I had every intention of dealing severely with him for the hard chase he had given me.

But he kept on, the white line of fence clearly outlined beyond him; and then when my hand was almost upon him he rose at the fence, as though sprung from the earth itself, and hung a moment sheer above the sharp line of the fence pickets, his whole figure held almost horizontal, in the fashion of trained high-jumpers, for what seemed an infinite time, as though by some witchery of the moonlight.

I plunged into the fence with a force that knocked the wind out of me, and as I clung panting to the pickets the runner dropped with a tute the midst of a glass vegetable on the farther side. A writer



Held Up His Hands in Sign of Surrender.

turned his head, grinned at me sheepishly through the pickets, and gave a kick that set the glass tinkling. Then he held up his hands in sign of surrender and I saw that they were cut and bleeding. We were both badly blown, and while we regained our wind we stared at each other. He was the first to speak.

"Kicked, bit or stung?" he muttered, dolefully; "that saddest of all words, 'stung!' It's as clear as moonlight that I'm badly mused, not to say cut."

"May I trouble you not to kick out any more of that glass?" The gardener will be here in a minute and fish you out."

"Lawsy, what is it? An aquarium, that you fish for me?"

He chuckled softly, but sat perfectly quiet, finding, it seemed, a certain humor in his situation. The gardener came running and swore in broad Scots at the destruction of the frame. We got over the fence and released our captive, who talked to himself in doleful undertones as we hauled him to his feet amid a renewed clink of glass.

"Gently, gentlemen; behold the night-blooming cereus! Not all the court-plaster in the universe can glue me together again." He gazed ruefully at his slashed arms, and rubbed his legs. "The next time I seek the garden at dewy eve I'll wear my tin suit."

"There won't be any next time for you. What did you run for?"

"Trying to lower my record—it's a mania with me. And as one good question deserves another, may I ask why you didn't tell me there was a glass-works beyond that fence? It wasn't sportmanlike to hide a murderous hazard like that. But I cleared those pickets with a yard to spare, and broke my record."

"You broke about seven yards of glass," I replied. "It may sober you to know that you are under arrest. The watchman here has a constable's license."

"He also has hair that suggests the common garden or bolted carrot. The tint is not to my liking; yet it is not for me to be capricious where the Lord has hardened his heart."

"What is your name?" I demanded. "Gillespie, R. Gillespie. The 'R' will indicate to you the depth of my humility: I make it a life work to hide the fact that I was baptized Reginald."

"I've been expecting you, Mr. Gillespie, and now I want you to come over to my house and give an account of yourself. I will take charge of this man, Andy. I promise that he shan't set foot here again. And, Andy, you need mention this affair to no one."

"Very good, sir."

He touched his hat respectfully.

"I have business with this person. Say nothing to the ladies at St. Agatha's about him."

He saluted and departed; and with Gillespie walking beside me I started for the boat-landing.

He had wrapped a handkerchief about one arm and I gave him my own for the other. His right arm was bleeding freely below the elbow and I tied it up for him.

"That jump deserved better luck," I volunteered, as he accepted my aid in silence.

"I'm proud to have you like it. Will you kindly tell me who the devil you are?"

"My name is Donovan."

"I don't wholly care for it," he observed, mournfully. "Think it over and see if you can't do better. I'm not sure that I'm going to grow fond of you. What's your business with me, anyhow?"

"My business, Mr. Gillespie, is to see that you leave this lake by the first and fastest train."

"Is it possible?" he drawled, mockingly.

"More than that," I replied in his own key; "it is decidedly probable."

"Meanwhile, it would be diverting to know where you're taking me. I thought the other chap was the constable."

"I'm taking you to the house of a friend where I'm visiting. I'm going to row you in your boat. It's only a short distance; and when we get there I shall have something to say to you."

He made no reply, but got into the boat without ado. I turned over in my mind the few items of information that I had gained from Miss Pat and her niece touching the young man who was now my prisoner, and found that I knew little enough about him. He was the unwelcome and annoying suitor of Miss Helen Holbrook, and I had caught him prowling about St. Agatha's in a manner that was indefensible.

He sat huddled in the stern, nursing his swathed arms on his knees and whistling dolefully. The lake was a broad pool of silver. Save for the soft splash of Ijima's paddle behind me and the slight wash of water on the near shore, silence possessed the world. Gillespie looked about with some curiosity, but said nothing, and when I drove the boat to the Glenarm landing he crawled out and followed me through the wood without a word.

I flashed on the lights in the library and after a short inspection of his wounds we went to my room and found sponges, plasters and ointments in the family medicine chest and cared for his injuries.

"There's no honor in tumbling into a greenhouse, but such is R. Gillespie's luck. My shins look like scarlet fever, and without sound legs a man's better dead."

"Your legs seem to have got you into trouble; don't mourn the loss of them!" And I twisted a bandage under his left knee-cap where the glass had cut savagely.

"It's my poor wits, if we must fix the blame. It's an awful thing, sir, to be born with weak intellects. As man's legs carry him on orders from his head, there lies the seat of the difficulty. A weak mind, obedient legs, and there you go, plump into the bosom of a blooming asparagus bed, and the enemy lays violent hands on you. If you put any more of that stinky pudding on that cut I shall undoubtedly hit you, Mr. Donovan. Ah, thank you, thank you so much!"

As I finished with the vaseline he lay back on the couch and sighed deeply and I rose and sent Ijima away with the basin and towels.

"Will you drink? There are 12 kinds of whiskey."

"My dear Mr. Donovan, the thought of strong drink saddens me. Such poor wits as mine are not helped by alcoholic stimulants. I was drunk once—beautifully, marvelously, nobly drunk, so that antiquity came up to me with the thud of a motor car hitting an orphan asylum; and I saw Julius Caesar driving a chariot up

Fifth avenue and Cromwell poised on one foot on the shorter spire of St. Patrick's cathedral. Are you aware, my dear sir, that one of those spires is shorter than the other?"

"I certainly am not," I replied, bluntly, wondering what species of madman I had on my hands.

"It's a fact, confided to me by a prominent engineer of New York, who has studied those spires daily since they were put up. He told me that when he had surrounded five high-balls the north spire was higher; but that the sixth tumblerful always raised the south spire about 11 feet above it. Now, wouldn't that doddle you?"

"It would, Mr. Gillespie; but may I ask you to cut out this rot?"

"My dear Mr. Donovan, it's indelicate of you to speak of cutting anything—and me with my legs. But I'm at your service. You have tended my grievous wounds like a gentleman and now do you wish me to unfold my past, present and future?"

"I want you to get out of this and be quick about it. Your biography doesn't amuse me; I caught you prowling disgracefully about St. Agatha's. Two ladies are domiciled there who came here to escape your annoying attentions. Those ladies were put in my charge by an old friend, and I don't propose to stand any nonsense from you, Mr. Gillespie. You seem to be at least half sane."

Reginald Gillespie raised himself on the couch and grinned joyously.

"Thank you—thank you for that word! That's just twice as high as anybody ever rated me before."

"I was trying to be generous," I said. "There's a point at which I begin to be bored, and when that's reached I'm likely to grow quarrelsome. Are there any moments of the day or night when you are less a fool than others?"

"Well, Donovan, I've often speculated about that, and my conclusion is that my mind is at its best when I'm asleep and enjoying a nightmare. Then, I have sometimes thought, my intellectual parts are most intelligently employed."

"I may well believe you," I declared with asperity. "Now I hope I can pound it into you in some way that your presence in this neighborhood is offensive—to me—personally."

He stared at the ceiling, silent, imperturbable.

"And I'm going to give you safe conduct through the lines—or if necessary I'll buy your ticket and start you for New York. And if there's an atom of honor in you, you'll go peaceably and not publish the fact that you know the whereabouts of these ladies."

He reflected gravely for a moment.

"I think," he said, "that on the whole that's a fair proposition. But you seem to have the impression that I wish to annoy these ladies."

"You don't for a moment imagine that you are likely to entertain them, do you? You haven't got the idea that you are necessary to their happiness, have you?"

He raised himself on his elbow with some difficulty; flinched as he tried to make himself comfortable and began: "The trouble with Miss Pat is—"

"There is no trouble with Miss Pat," I snapped.

"The trouble between Miss Pat and me is the same old trouble of the buttons," he remarked, dolorously.

"Buttons, you idiot!"

"Quite so. Buttons, just plain, every-day buttons; buttons for buttoning purposes."

The fellow was undoubtedly mad. I looked about for a weapon; but he went on gravely:

"What does the name Gillespie mean? Of what is it the sign and symbol wherever man hides his nakedness? Button, button, who'll buy my buttons? It can't be possible that you never heard of the Gillespie buttons? Where have you lived, my dear sir?"

"Will you please stop talking rot and explain what you want here?" I demanded, with growing heat.

"That, my dear sir, is exactly what I'm doing. I'm a suitor for the hand of Miss Patricia's niece, Miss Patricia scorns me; she says I'm a mere child of the Philistine rich and declines an alliance without thanks. If you must know the truth, And it's all on account of the fact, shameful enough, I admit, that my father died and left me a large and prosperous button factory."

"Why don't you give the infernal thing away—sell it out to a trust?"

"Ah! ah!"—and he raised himself again and pointed a bandaged hand at me. "I see that you are a man of penetration! You have a keen notion of business! You anticipate me! I did sell the infernal thing to a trust, but there was no shaking it! They made me president of the combination, and I control more buttons than any other living man! My dear sir, I dictate the button prices of the world. I can tell you to a nicety how many buttons are swallowed annually by the babies of the universe. But I hope, sir, that I use my power wisely and without oppressing the people."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Youthful Criminal

Problem Facing Every Large City

By THURDE RAYLE BRUCE

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LARGE percentage of the crime of this nation is committed by boys in their teens.

The problem of the youthful criminal is one that every big city is facing, and it is a most difficult one to solve. There is no experienced detective in the United States that cannot recount scores of instances where lads of tender age have perpetrated deeds which at the outset seemed the work of seasoned experts. I have encountered any number of such cases and my experience with the juvenile malefactor is that he is often bolder and harder to round up than the veteran. He will fool you by his slippery methods and his cunning in making a quick escape.

It is the plain truth to say that the indulgent and lenient treatment of children by their own parents is chiefly responsible for the wrongdoing that converts the youngsters into lawbreakers. Boys of this generation are given far more money than they should have to spend for their pleasure. They get the habit of extravagance and when sufficient cash is not forthcoming are ready to steal, usually beginning by pilfering from their father or mother, as that seems a less sin than to take what belongs to strangers.

I have repeatedly known lads of 15 to steal their mothers' jewelry and to go through their fathers' clothing at night while he slept. Many a mortified parent, to save the honor of his family, has given it out that his home has been invaded by sneak thieves rather than admit that a degenerate son has enacted the role of a criminal.

Day of Dignified Plug Hat Past

By EMERSON WOOD

New York and Boston are about the only places in the United States where the silk hat is still in considerable evidence.

There is no use in blinking the fact that the day of the dignified plug has passed, although certain gentlemen of the old school cling to the lofty headgear of our fathers. In many a town of good size out west, as I know from personal experience, not a dozen men in an entire community can boast the ownership of such an article.

There are not over 100 men in the United States employed as silk hatters and I do not think there are more than half a dozen shops which manufacture them.

One reason for their decline is their unfitness for ordinary wear. Under modern conditions they are out of place; for instance, in street cars, elevators and the like institutions that didn't exist a generation ago.

The derby isn't half so imposing, but it is adapted to present-day conditions and that is why it has driven out the "bee-gum" hat, especially in America.

In London there has been some waning of the tall hat, but it is still the only correct thing in the west end, where the society folk move about.

In the east end the bankers and professional men, who once thought it indispensable, have, to a great degree, abandoned it, just as they have over here.

Coal mines should be made as safe, in my opinion, as our modern office buildings, by the use of steel construction and re-enforced concrete.

Had the St. Paul mine had an elevator shaft or several of them walled in with re-enforced concrete walls and iron stairs leading from the lowest level to the surface of the earth and several elevators in each shaft, in addition to several smaller air shafts with re-enforced concrete walls having also iron stairs leading from the lowest level to the top, then undoubtedly all the men in the mine would have been saved. And had there been re-enforced concrete pillars or posts of the same size as the wooden ones used—which would probably have cost but little more than wooden ones—there would have been small opportunity for a fire.

I am not a miner or an engineer, but it seems to me that with the proper number of air shafts and fans of sufficient power no black damp or gases could accumulate in sufficient quantity to do any injury.

And with several stairways and elevators for use in case of emergency few men would lose their lives.

I hope the laws compelling such construction of mines will be forthcoming.

World Should Rest in Peace

By L. P. ALLEN

This contradicts the theories of attraction. The world should rest in peace.

There will be no collision between the comet and the earth or any other planet.

The man who believes in attraction denies the creation.

A good mechanic able to construct a machine will certainly be able to put it in good working order.

Attraction is only a belief, like many other things.

There is no positive proof.

